

SCOTLAND'S STORY

50

Bid for Scottish Parliament that was torpedoed

Club or Country for Tartan Army?

From boneshaker bike to jet aircraft: transport's century

Nuclear vision that lost its way

Thatcher's legacy: wipeout of the Scottish Tory MPs



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SCOTLAND'S STORY



COVER:
Ravenscraig
Steel Works,
once a symbol
of pride, fell
victim to the
economic
shake-up of the
1980s.
The plant was
closed in 1992
amid much
acrimony,
before being
blown to
pieces four
years later.

A lesson in alienation

Perhaps one of the greatest political ironies of 20th-century Scotland was that Margaret Thatcher, iron-willed champion of the British Union, should have done more for the cause of Scottish Home Rule than any other individual in the issue's century-long history.

There is strong evidence to support this claim.

The facility with which the Thatcher government was able to force through a raft of extremely unpopular policies in Scotland, in itself, loosened confidence in the constitutional status quo.

Equally significant was the growth of a popular perception that her administration was at best indifferent to public opinion in Scotland, and at worst, actively anti-Scottish.

By the time Mrs Thatcher resigned in 1990, there was a palpable sense of anger and frustration at the fact that, while at least three-quarters of the Scottish electorate consistently rejected Conservatism, this verdict was rendered superfluous by the voting preferences of England.

No one could have foreseen the role Mrs Thatcher was to play

when her government originally came to power, however.

Labour, having presided over the disastrous 'Winter of Discontent', left the Home Rule referendum of 1979 fatally compromised by the caveat that 40 per cent of the electorate had to show its approval of Devolution before a Scottish Assembly could be established.

With the target unreached, the chance to create a Scottish Assembly was lost.

Viewed in retrospect, this missed opportunity denied the nation a platform from which it could have better checked the battering ram subsequently used against Scotland's industrial and public sectors, not to mention the introduction in 1988 of the hated Poll Tax.

The Poll Tax was a system of local taxation, now universally discredited, which was 'tried out' on Scotland before being introduced elsewhere. Only after massive public protest and much heartache was it eventually abandoned.

Tory veterans of the Thatcher years know from subsequent experience that the Scottish electorate are not easily inclined to forgive and forget.

'Disaster' as the '79



Who's with me! Shop steward Jimmy Reid was instrumental in rescuing the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders in 1972.

The classical old Royal High School in Edinburgh was being prepared; the path for a Scottish Assembly looked a stroll. Then surprise! The 'For' vote was lost. Home Rule became once again a distant prospect

The early 1970s was a turbulent era in modern political history, comparable perhaps to the years before the First World War, when the political system came under attack from several fronts at once and the old party system began to crack.

In 1970 Edward Heath had come to power pledged to tackle Britain's long economic decline with a combination of business managerialism, inspired by the 'big is beautiful' fashion, and privatisation.

The first led to upheavals in local government, the health service, the civil service; but privatisation petered out after a

few experiments of which the most prominent was perhaps the denationalisation of the pubs in Gretna and Carlisle.

By 1972, with unemployment over the 'appalling' level of a million, the government was in full retreat. Failing industries were rescued (Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, Rolls Royce, British Leyland), regional policy revived, public expenditure increased and the most interventionist Industry Act to date put through.

Heath had achieved his life's ambition of taking the UK into the European Community, but the issue divided the country, with Labour pledged to a referendum on withdrawal. Heath's

government was brought down after only three-and-a-half years by a combination of revived class conflict, discontent on the periphery, and international economic crisis.

The government had opted at the outset for confrontation with the trade unions through the Industrial Relations Act with its panoply of sanctions and regulations and a special court to enforce them.

This machinery proved almost completely ineffective and by 1972 was largely in abeyance as the government sought a renewed dialogue with unions and management.

By 1973, however, it was locked

referendum fails



The classical old Royal High School in Edinburgh was designated to be the Assembly's home.

in a confrontation with the coal miners over pay, at precisely the time that OPEC had declared restrictions and a huge price rise following the Middle East war.

Desperate for a way out, Heath called an election in February 1974 on the issue of 'who governs the country?'

The Conservatives actually gained the most votes and might have returned to office but for a surge in support for the Liberals and another set of crises in the periphery.

In 1972, after four years of troubles and the political disaster of internment in Northern Ireland, the government had suspended Stormont and established direct rule.

The Ulster Unionist MPs had resigned the Tory whip in protest and now sat on the opposition benches. In 1973-74 the government was in the process of installing a power-sharing government with moderate Unionists and Nationalists. In

In the Euro campaign, class conflict was addressed by jointly bringing in both the unions and business in a form of corporatist partnership

Scotland, the SNP had been advancing by fits and starts since the early 1960s and in 1974 made a dramatic breakthrough, capitalising on the energy crisis with the slogans 'It's Scotland's Oil' and 'Rich Scots or Poor Britons?'. They elected seven MPs in February, 1974, who were joined by three Welsh Nationalists.

Harold Wilson formed a minority Labour government and, while he gained a narrow majority in a second general election in October, this was soon lost through by-elections and the defections of Jim Sillars and John Robertson to the short-lived Scottish Labour Party.

The SNP increased their seats to 11 in October, at the expense of

the Conservatives, and were breathing down Labour's neck in its central heartlands.

Meanwhile, the Kilbrandon Commission set up in 1969 by Wilson's earlier government to stall the Devolution issue after Winnie Ewing's victory at the Hamilton by-election, finally reported, just as the issue was heating up again.

Kilbrandon was a rather confused and divided report, but it did clearly recommend an elected Scottish Assembly.

Heath had already committed the Conservatives to Devolution, albeit for a rather contrived scheme in which bills would have to pass both in Edinburgh and London, but never really convinced his party. Labour had

officially dropped Scottish Home Rule in 1958 – it had been a dead letter since the 1920s – but there was still a significant Labour Home Rule contingent.

Kilbrandon caught the Labour Party at a bad time. At first the leadership condemned the proposals, then prevaricated until, between the two elections of 1974 the National Executive Committee forced the recall of the Scottish Conference.

Almost without a fight, the Conference voted to accept a legislative assembly for Scotland, to feature in the forthcoming election manifesto.

The issue was to dog the Labour government to its dying day. The party in Scotland was divided, with a Home Rule section, a fiercely anti-Devolution contingent, and a large mass in between, who saw the issue as a tactical necessity.

Following Margaret Thatcher's accession to the leadership, the Conservatives moved sharply against Devolution, provoking the resignation of their entire Scottish shadow team under Alec Buchanan Smith.

Successive bills were savaged in Parliament, filibustered and finally saddled with a requirement for approval in a referendum by a majority consisting of at least 40 per cent of the entire registered electorate.

The minority government of Harold Wilson, and (from 1976) James Callaghan, survived against the odds for five years largely by deals with the Liberals, Ulster Unionists and Scottish and Welsh Nationalists hoping for Devolution.

The European issue was resolved in 1975 by a referendum in which, unprecedentedly, ministers were allowed to campaign on opposing sides. Scotland was less enthusiastic than England but did endorse EC membership by a substantial margin, (which fell short of the 40 per cent of the electorate required for Devolution in 1979).

Class conflict was addressed by bringing in the unions and business into a form of corporatist partnership. This held almost until the end, but was seriously



■ Good times for the SNP: in 1974 they could muster 11 MPs at Westminster but after the failure of the referendum they crashed to two seats.

► damaged by the IMF crisis of 1976 when the government was forced to accept painful cuts in public expenditure. By 1978 the government could see the light at the end of the tunnel, with inflation down and the economy reviving.

The Scotland Act provided for a legislative Scottish Assembly, albeit with tightly-defined powers and under Westminster tutelage. The proposed Welsh Assembly would have administrative powers only. By sheer luck, Labour had escaped by-elections in Scotland until 1978, when the SNP tide was ebbing and polls now showed Labour with a good chance of victory in a quick election.

Fatally, however, Callaghan decided to hold out until 1979 with a restrictive five per cent norm for the new pay round, and referendums in Scotland and Wales in March.

That winter the dam burst, with mass strikes against the pay limit (the Winter of Discontent)

Margaret Thatcher swept to power on the back of the lost Assembly - and already previous Tory pledges were being forgotten

shattering Labour's claims to partnership with the unions. The referendum campaigns came at a time of deep unpopularity for Labour. Within the party, the anti-Devolution elements emerged in force and the referendum campaign saw the likes of Brian Wilson, Robin Cook and the indefatigable Tam Dalyell in full attack against the central plank of their own government's Scottish policy.

Constituency parties were divided and failed to get out the vote. The Conservatives, for their part, promised that a NO vote would not mean the end of Devolution, but a better scheme.

A handful of individual

Conservatives like Alec Buchanan Smith campaigned on the YES side. The SNP were on the retreat since Donald Dewar's victory at the Garscadden by-election of 1978 and were still divided between Home Rulers and the 'independence or nothing' faction.

Business groups supported and funded the NO campaign, while the trade unions, especially the TUC, were in the YES camp. The result was a collapse in support for the Scotland Act, which had for years looked set for an easy victory. The YES side won by a margin of less than four per cent and, with a low turnout, this was well short of the 40 per cent threshold required. In Wales,

Devolution went down to a crushing defeat by a margin of four-to-one. As the government tried to play for time, the SNP joined forces with the Conservatives and Liberals to defeat the government by one vote on a motion of confidence.

The subsequent election saw Margaret Thatcher sweep to power. While Labour held up better in Scotland, the SNP lost all but two of their seats.

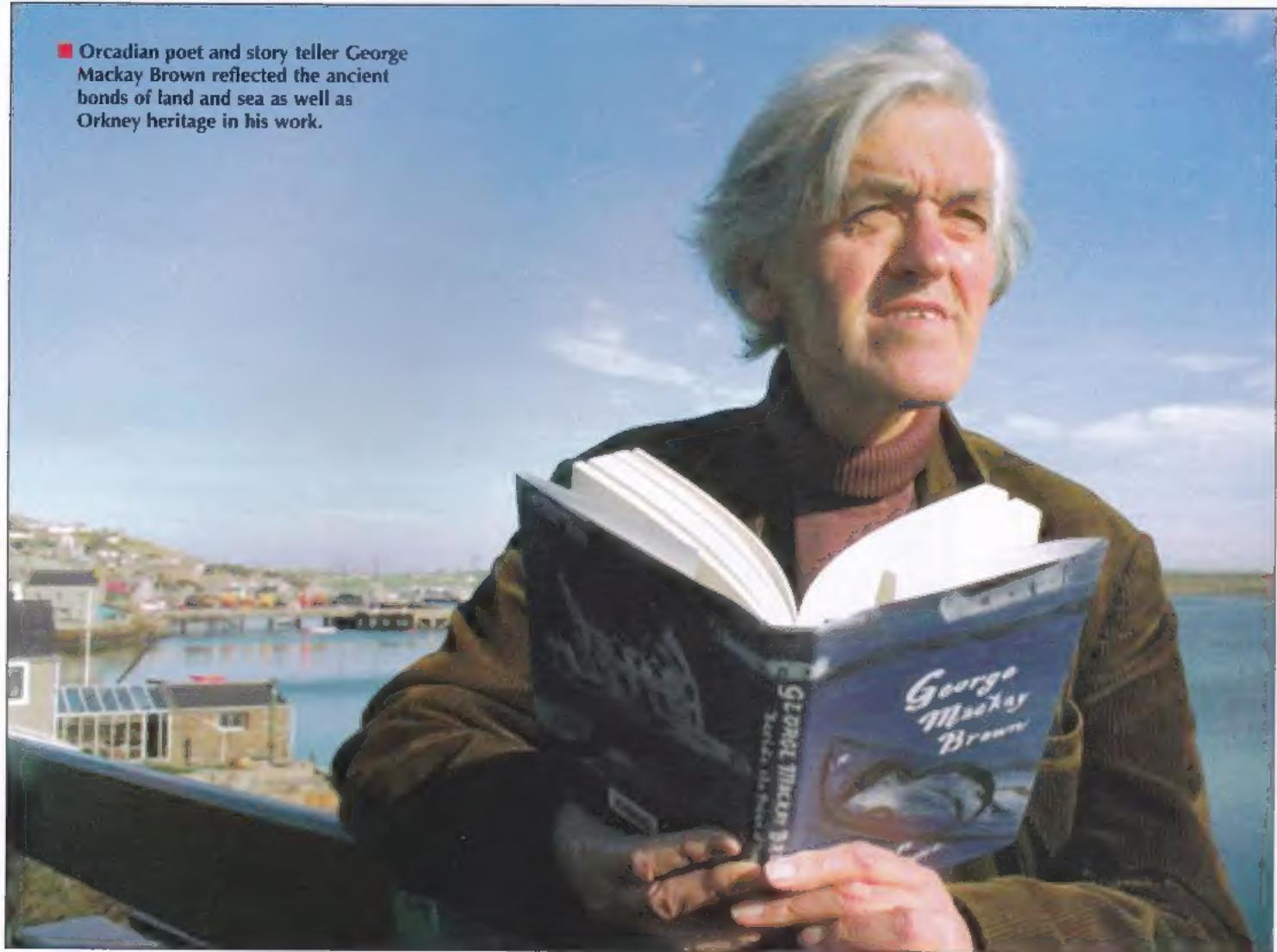
For Home Rulers, this was nothing less than a disaster as the incoming government, forgetting the pledges given earlier by Francis Pym and Alec Douglas Home, declared the issue dead.

Yet after nearly a hundred years of effort, a Home Rule Bill had been passed for the first time and endorsed, however narrowly, by popular referendum of the people of Scotland.

This was, in the words of the late John Smith, unfinished business, although few of us at the time thought that it would take all of 20 years to complete. ■

Scots writers among best from anywhere

■ Orcadian poet and story teller George Mackay Brown reflected the ancient bonds of land and sea as well as Orkney heritage in his work.



Over the centuries literary Scotland held its place on the European stage. It is the same today - except the range, talent and numbers of Scottish writers is astonishing

With the Second World War died one of Scotland's noblest dreams – the dream of a Scottish literary and cultural Renaissance, which would restore an ancient sense of Scottish identity through rediscovery of the Scots language, and a re-awakening of an essentially rural bond with landscape and the rhythms of season and peasant labour, on land or sea.

Writers like Hugh MacDiarmid, Neil Gunn, Eric Linklater, Lewis Grassic Gibbon, Edwin Muir and Naomi Mitchison, to name but a few, may have quarrelled regarding their political and cultural priorities, but all shared the same vision. It was

of an ancient Scotland in which timeless values and archetypes emerged from a sense of rural community and ancestral race memories – the 'Great Memory' of Yeats in Ireland, given authenticity and power by Carl Gustav Jung with his theories of a 'Collective Unconscious'.

All these writers located their protagonists, in poetry and prose, in a magical relationship with soil, history, and an immemorial past of broch and earthhouse. All found their protagonists' significance to lie in a final epiphany which merged them, male or female, with their place, their people and their past.

As with Gibbon's Chris Guthrie of

'A Scots Quair' (1932-34), dying into a timeless landscape, or Gibbon's Finn MacHamish, seen at the end of 'The Silver Darlings' (1941) at the heart of a circle which Gunn saw as the essential Scotland of family, community, history, legend, and ultimately, myth.

A fiction and poetry which asserted a rural essentialism and mythology in the inter-war years of industrial decline and urban degeneration was always going to have to fight against the difficult odds of ugly contemporary reality.

It was a reality already recognised by novels like Douglas Brown's 'The House with the Green Shutters' (1901) and continued in the

► sceptical urban pictures of 'The Shipbuilders' (George Blake, 1935) or 'Dance of the Apprentices' (Edward Gaitens, 1948).

How much greater a blow to it was the Second World War's exposure of the unacceptable face of such rural essentialism, as grandiloquently asserted in Himmler's visions of an Aryan racial purity set in German forests, represented by a 'noble' new generation in touch with Teutonic song, legend and myth?

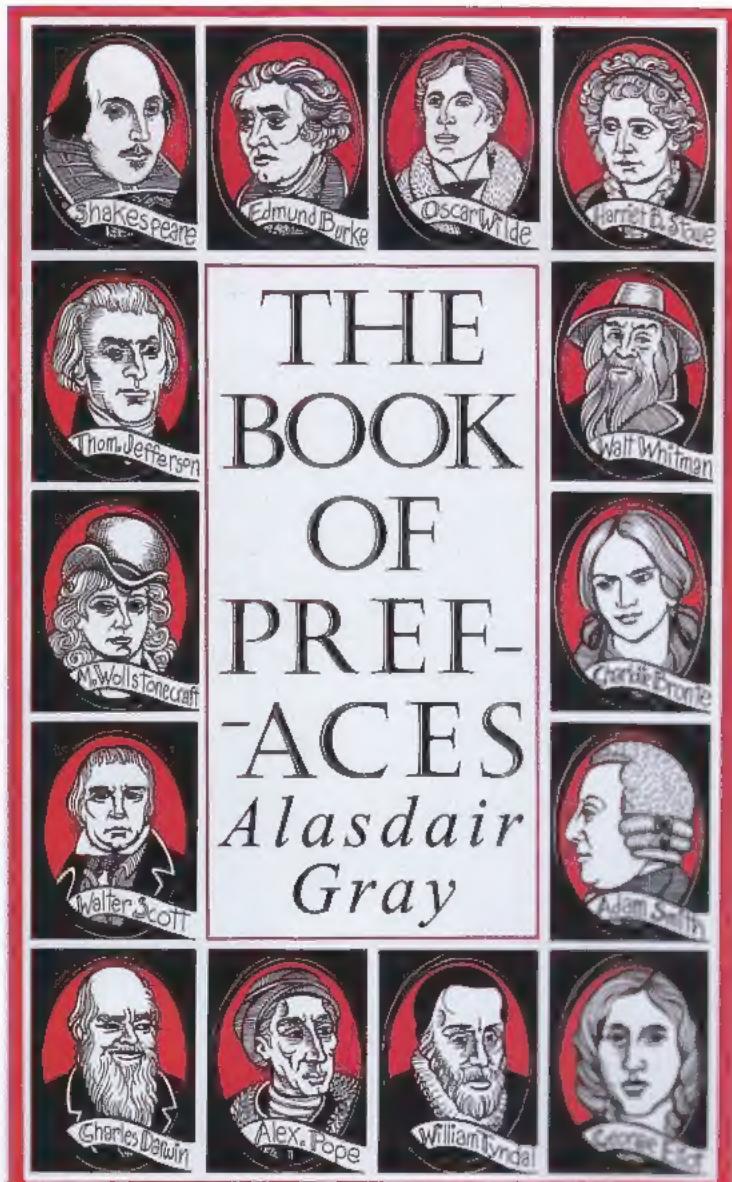
The last great efforts of the Renaissance movement came in the late 1940s, in novels like Mitchison's 'The Bull Calves'; for the next 20 years the dark undercurrent of the fiction of Douglas Brown and Blake became the mainstream, a bleak river of scepticism and satire on a fallen Scotland of failed icons, be they ministers, teachers, soldiers — a Scotland very different from a Land of Mountain and Flood, peopled by enduring and archetypically noble peasants.

Instead, in the 1950s, the focus was on the blighted industrial towns of the Lowlands like Motherwell and Wishaw. Devoid of the questionable glamour of Glasgow, with its No Mean City razor gangs and sherrickings, these twilight communities, stranded between spoiled fields and full urbanisation, with their football rivalries, their sectarianism, and their drink-and-poverty drabness, seemed to writers like Dorothy Haynes and Robin Jenkins in uncompromising novels such as 'Winter's Traces' (1947) and 'The Thistle and the Grail' (1954) to be truer representations of a contemporary wasteland Scotland.

Jenkins is today, at almost 90, arguably Scotland's greatest living novelist, whose work, combining elements of Stevenson and Douglas Brown on one hand and Hardy and Ibsen on the other, has consistently mocked Scotland's apparently romantic and proud history.

He found instead the modern results of ages of internecine religious and class hostility, and debasing urbanisation, in enigmatic anti-heroes such as the protagonists of 'The Changeling' (1958), 'Fergus Lamont' (1979), and his latest, 'Poor Angus' (2000).

It was Jenkins who began the tradition of reducing traditional but perhaps outworn Scottish icons and values which culminates in the work of James Kelman. He was joined in



■ The cover of Alasdair Gray's 'Prefaces' with illustrations by the writer.

this denigration of Scottish sacred cows by many others, including Muriel Spark in novels like 'The Ballad of Peckham Rye' (1961) and 'The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie' (1961), with their attacks on the Scotsman on destructive make in London and Scottish education; and James Kennaway, with novels like 'Tunes of Glory' revealing the dark underside to The Scottish soldier and the Scottish upper classes.

What emerged was a post-war tradition of disillusionment with virtually all pre-war images and representations of Scotland, a bleak tradition of iconoclasm which, far from being invented by Irvine Welsh in novels such as 'Trainspotting' (1993), has a post-war pedigree which includes novels such as 'Young Adam' (Alexander Trocchi, 1961), 'From Scenes Like These' (Gordon

Williams, 1968), and 'The Dear Green Place' (Archie Hind, 1966).

This last succinctly summed up the movement from Renaissance to realism in its mockery of the original ancient meanings of Glasgow's name; no longer Defoe's 'most beautiful little orchard town in Europe', Glasgow — and by implication Scotland — was now seen as crushing creativity and cultural possibilities in its philistine Victorian materialism and inherited Calvinism.

Novelists were not alone in this negation of an older heroic Scotland. Drama had increasingly turned to the dark side — James Bridie's last and radically-different work, 'Mr Gillie' — the account of a failed teacher in a small semi-industrial Lowland town — had appeared in 1950, moving him more towards the realistic social commentary of Unity theatre as seen, for example, in the late 1940s in Robert McLeish's 'The Gorbals Story' or Ena Lamont Stewart's 'Men Should Weep'.

Robert Garioch's post-war poetry

hardly shares MacDiarmid's Renaissance visions in its mockery of Edinburgh pomposity in a beautifully reductive Edinburgh Scots, with fellow poets like Maurice Lindsay and Alexander Scott turning increasingly to an ironic view of Scotland in a fallen modern world.

And when in the 1960s, with new writers like Iain Crichton Smith, George Mackay Brown, and Norman MacCaig, poetry and fiction entered a new phase, it was nevertheless a period which rejected past values and myths.

For Crichton Smith standing stones, land-and-seascape and the movement of weather and seasons were simply facts of existence, uninterpretable and unknowable by humans in communities blighted by dogmatic theology and materialism — as in his 'Consider the Lilies' of 1968.

Mackay Brown's wonderful Orkney stories and poems are filled with the sense of loss of an older communion, his modern Orkney folk detached from their old bond with land and sea.

MacCaig's poetry, for all its love of nature, is more pre-occupied with his own mind creating metaphors for an external nature which cares little for its inhabitants, just as history and mythology seem to him suspect human impositions, pathetic fallacies of a sad nation.

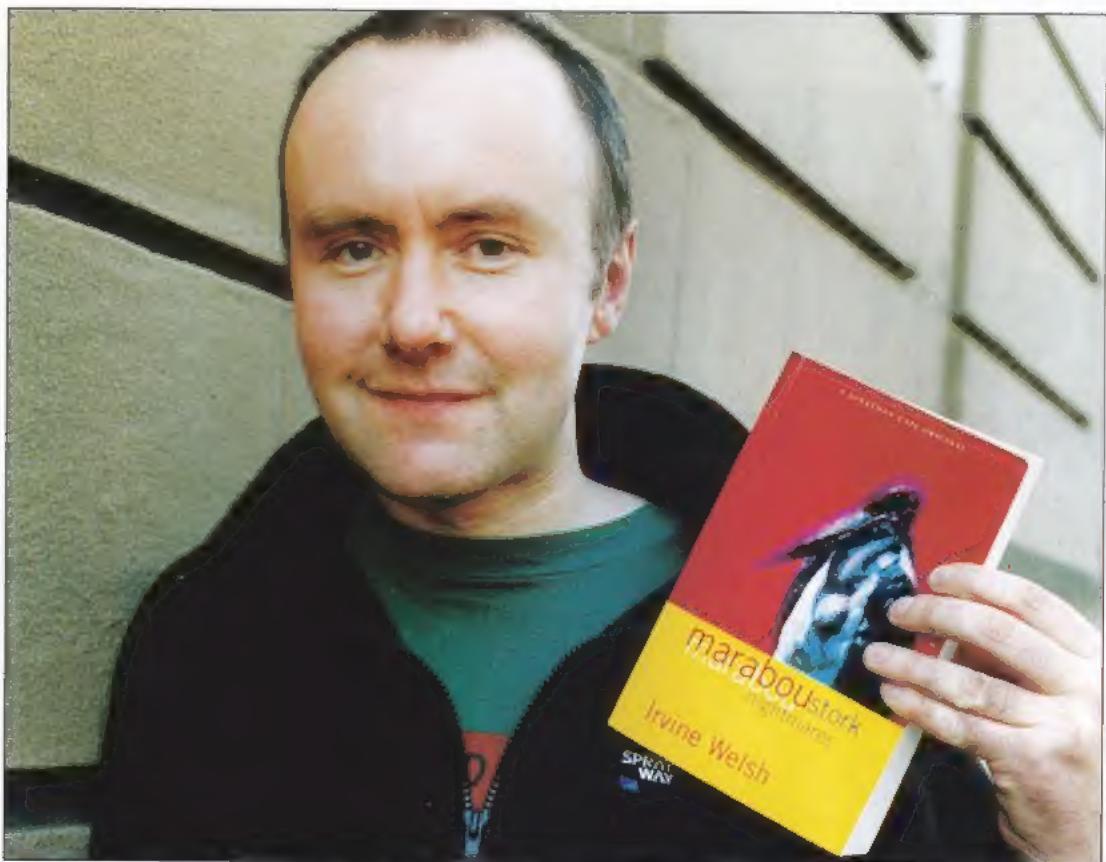
And all through the 1970s this sense of loss and decline rules — in plays like 'The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil', 'The Slab Boys', 'The Bevellers', seeing Scotland in decline in history and work, or plays by writers like Bill Bryden and Tom McGrath, which continually analysed and deplored that stereotypical urban Scot, The Hardman.

The novels of William McIlvanney, George Friel, Alan Spence and James Kelman, for all their modulations of emphasis in romanticising or darkening the urban Scottish predicament, shared an essentially tragic view of what Scotland had become, with alienated protagonists, often adolescents, adrift in a twilight society neither Scottish, British or American.

To describe this drama and fiction in such simplistic terms is, however, to miss the fact much of it was outstanding in its ability to represent Scottish actuality. It was often great art, its negativity having a positive and cathartic effect on later writers.

These novels and plays brought home to many Scots a sense of decay and need for change they hadn't fully recognised, and with hindsight, the

Scotland's dark side is often declared as part of the process to force change



Irvine Welsh's bleak iconoclasm acknowledges a debt to Alex Trocchi, Gordon Williams and Archie Hind.

failure of Devolution in 1979 can be seen – as it was for William McIlvanney in his post-referendum essays, ‘Surviving the Shipwreck’ – as somehow the lowest point yet reached and yet a springboard for the future.

And with Alasdair Gray’s ‘Lanark’ in 1981 the cultural landscape changed fundamentally once again. This astonishing novel, which broke all limits of genre, being a gallimaufry of disguised autobiography, science-fiction, bildungsroman, and Swiftian satire on Scottish and Western values, more than any other liberated

Scottish fiction – and the arts generally? – from its prevailing methodologies of social realism.

Younger writers were quick to seize inspiration, Ian Banks’s ‘The Bridge’ (1986) specifically acknowledging its debt to Gray, in its comparable blend of realism and fantasy, and its theme of emergence from trauma.

Indeed, this theme of recovery from trauma has developed as one of the most significant and positive of contemporary Scottish fiction, in novels by Janice Galloway (‘The Trick is To Keep Breathing’, 1990), Alison Kennedy (‘Looking For the Possible Dance’, 1990), Carl MacDougall (‘The Lights Below’ 1990).

Even James Kelman with his Booker Prize Winner in 1994, ‘How Late It Was, How Late’, with its moving picture of blinded Samson, urban loser, moving with resilience and dignity through series of personal and social crises, yet ending affirmatively; while Welsh’s ‘Marabou Stork Nightmares’ (1995) echoes the type in its combination of real trauma and private fantasy – with its protagonist moving at least to recognition of his deformation by family, poverty and debased urban culture.

Gray was not, however, the sole inspirer of what was to become another Renaissance (or at least a splendid revival) of Scottish

literature, one which was to make some political commentators attribute the recovery from the 1979 referendum despair as much to Scotland’s poets and novelists as to politicians.

Edwin Morgan’s poetry and especially his ‘Sonnets From Scotland’ (1984), a majestic revisioning of Scotland from ancient beginnings to astonishing futures, inspired a new wave of younger visionaries like Bill Herbert, Robert Crawford, and Don Paterson.

Liz Lochead’s poetry and drama, especially her ‘Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off’ (1987), with its insistence on remaking the dark old myths of Scotland Europe, represented a new movement in drama, with women writers like Sue Glover and Rona Munro challenging gender boundaries.

And out of all this ferment of changing perspectives new Scotlands emerged; no longer either seen as essentially rural or urban, but combining both, so that the new fiction of Banks and Kennedy, MacDougall and Andrew Greig, could move its city-damaged protagonists out to hills and history, allowing them to see that Scotland is multi-form and endlessly varied, with new ethnic minorities and ancient identities, and with oil rigs and computers co-existing with Gaelic and Scots language traditions



Liz Lochead’s work represents exciting new movements in drama.

Scottish writing is still rethinking itself - but its variety disguises the final shape

and customs. This confident eclecticism has come to characterise the end of the old millennium and the start of the new, as though Scottish writers no longer accept old and parochial limitations.

A huge variety of Scottish writing now works unselfconsciously within Scottish settings and themes – the Roman novels of Alan Massie, together with his impressive studies of post-war Europe and its inherited neuroses, represents some of the finest fiction in Britain today, as does the work of Stuart Hood, William Boyd and Ronald Frame.

Scottish crime writers like Iain Rankin, Chris Brookmyre, and Paul Johnstone have developed McIlvanney’s ‘Laidlaw’ fiction to make it the dominant version of the genre in Britain.

A host of new young writers are reshaping genres and bending rules, from Frank Kuppner’s award-winning and unplaceable prose surrealism to the new grotesquerie and magic realism of writers like Alan Warner, John Burnside, Ali Smith, Christopher Whyte, Laura Hurd and Michel Faber – to name only a few of the vivid new writers.

Anglo-Scottish writers – for want of a fairer description – like poet Carol Anne Duffy, or novelist Shona Mackay move easily from dealing with their Scottish origins to locating themselves in a broader British and Western context. And what is perhaps most encouraging is quite simply the way in which the writing can range from profound analysis of what it has meant, and means, to be Scottish, to looking from Scotland at the best writing from anywhere. An example of the first is Andrew O’Hagan’s moving account of the sins of the fathers moving through the generations in ‘Our Fathers’ (1999). And of the second, Alasdair Gray’s monumental tribute to the writers who have shaped him, ‘The Book of Prefaces’ (2000).

Scottish writing, like Scotland, has begun to re-shape itself – into what, its variety shows that it does not know. Its versions of post-modernism differ, perhaps, from others, in their energetic exuberance and willingness to break moulds.

Future imperfect for the beautiful game

For a century Scotland has had its hopes raised then dashed. Too often by minnows. The Hampden roar is gone. Club or country is the new dimension. So what is next?

The past 50 years have seen a remarkable transformation in the status of international football, from being the apex of playing careers and of national interest to a major inconvenience which disrupts the playing season and which is resented by the major clubs.

If we ask why international football once held pride of place then several reasons suggest themselves. In the first instance, until the mid-1960s it was a comparative rarity and such matches as were played tended to be of the friendly category. It was therefore difficult to say exactly where Scotland stood in world rankings. Domestically we were fine, breaking even with England over a century of fixtures.

Scotland was able to attain parity with its stronger neighbour partly because the Scots took the fixture rather more seriously than England did and partly because the presence of a maximum wage in England made it easier to keep Scotland's best players at home for much of their playing careers.

The Scotland football team spoke to something in the national psyche. We knew ourselves to be different from the English, not necessarily better, but different.



■ Heads we win: Scotland's Don Hutchison gets his forehead to the ball to bullet it behind England 'keeper David Seaman to give Scotland a 1-0 victory in the Euro 2000 tournament – but Scotland still did not qualify.

Scotland lacked the trappings of nationality that the Irish Republic had.

Without profoundly symbolic things like different postage stamps or a separate currency, and in the absence then of even a halfway-house parliament, the national football side was something round which feelings of nationality could be excited and channelled.

It was some time before Continental opposition was met frequently. Between the wars, Alan Morton of Rangers was capped 31 times and with the exception of one match against France all these caps were gained in Home Internationals.

An important difference between Scotland and England was soon revealed and it was this – for a Scottish player the highlight of his career was to represent his country against England at

Wembley, while for his southern counterpart it would have been to play for his club on the same ground in the final of the FA Cup.

Around these matches grew up a strange mythology. In the wartime games of the 1940s, Scotland were often heavily beaten, losing six and even eight goals in the process. It was easy to explain this away. Everyone knew that the England players were posted to Blackpool or Aldershot and did nothing else but play football.

Meanwhile, the 1939 Scots were on the tossing decks of minesweepers or waist-deep in jungle fronds. So ran the theory. Reality was different. No fewer than nine of the Scottish 1939 side were still available in 1944 had the Selectors cared to pick them.

The Second World War marked a great watershed in that in the immediate post-war years the

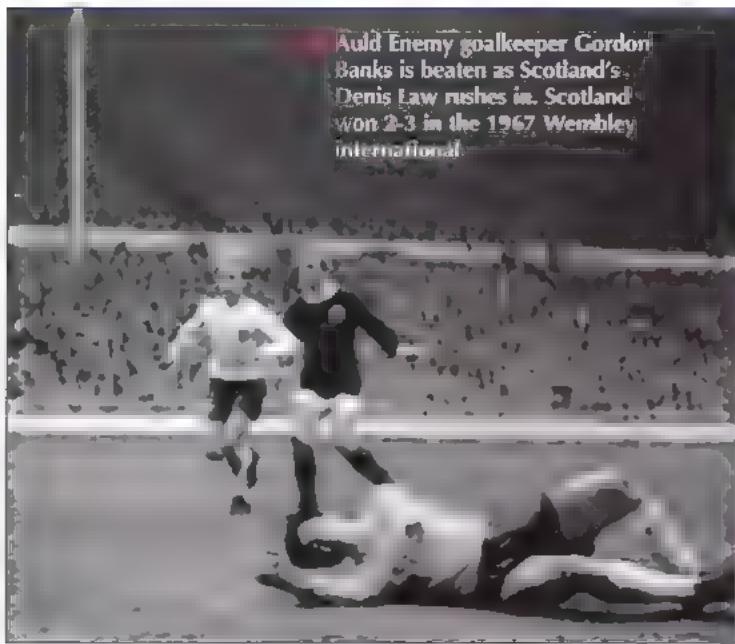
country had to decide whether to join the international competition, which every four years came nearer to justifying its optimistic title of World Cup, or whether to remain on the sidelines with a superior smile.

For a while it looked as if the Scots would take the second option.

An invitation to take part in South America in 1950 was only to be taken up if Scotland won its group, and the Scots were still so thrown that they decided not to go when they failed to win the Home International Championship, which was utilised for the purpose.

When eventually Scotland did participate in 1954 it was with a scratch team of 13 players, one goalkeeper only, who seemed to have been picked not so much on ability as on availability.

There were several reluctant



Auld Enemy goalkeeper Gordon Banks is beaten as Scotland's Denis Law rushes in. Scotland won 2-3 in the 1967 Wembley international.

conscripts at the tournament, although a 1-0 defeat from France was respectable, realising with a 7-0 drubbing by Uruguay. And the manager only he had been chosen by Selection Committee.

Four years later, Scotland did rather better, though there by qualification to the nation group than Switzerland in the final game at Highbury, the award of an outstanding goal from the England captain Reg Leafe.

This time Scotland's players instead of the bizarrely opted for remembering that there were no substitutes.

The Scots started with a draw against Yugoslavia, then unstuck, thereby setting a precedent, against Peru.

The latter were poor,

the French who apparently failed to notice that Paraguay had eliminated the highly-regarded Uruguay. The Paraguayans beat Scotland 3-2 and although the Scots played well against a French side that contained Juste Fontaine, the tournament's leading scorer, Scotland went down 2-1.

It would be 16 years before Scotland was back, oddly enough 16 years of the nation's greatest players like Jimmy Johnstone, Denis Law, Billy Bremner, Willie Henderson and Jim Baxter. Those who hark back to the glory days of the '60s and '70s have a curious blind spot for the heavy defeats the Scots sustained, on a scale that they have avoided recently.

It was the functionary Willie McDonald who got Scotland back to the finals in 1974 and, although the Old Firm Home-Scot fissure was still there, Scotland was indeed undefeated, having beaten France and drawn with Yugoslavia and Brazil. This established an interesting pattern in that defeat came and seldom came from unexpected quarters.

The high water mark was 1978 when the ebullient Ally MacLeod, a splendid motivator. Again nemesis was in wait for the Scots who had not worked out that since Peru were then the third strongest side in South America, and that since the two above them were Argentina and Brazil, then it was reasonable to assume Peru must be pretty useful.

The Scots were never as confident again and the pattern became one of redemption too late. Lose to Peru, beat Holland,

lose to Costa Rica, do better later against better opposition. The trend continues today. Play the first game of the 1998 World Cup in France with an unspoken dread as to what Brazil might do, then hold them to a creditable margin before going down heavily and discreditably to Morocco.

And meantime, out there in the big world, things were changing as power in the football sphere moved swiftly and inexorably from local associations to the big clubs. By definition, they are not happy to see their members on national duty, especially now that the clubs in England or elsewhere are their main source of income. The hub

is now at club level. His players are taken away may be injured, or taken to other clubs which is worse.

From the Scots point of view there has been a marked change in the composition of the travelling support or, for that matter, those who come to games in Scotland. The proliferation of international matches has not been helpful and fixtures against the likes of Latvia, Estonia, San Marino and Malta are unattractive, perhaps more unattractive than Scotland's own humble status should permit.

The paradox is that when Scotland had outstanding individuals the team suffered heavy, heavy defeats. It is now getting on for 10 years since Portugal took five off the Scots and even in Scotland's containing, non-exciting way, the team clinched a win against England at Wembley.

What is the future then for the tartan scarves, the Lions Rampant and the fright wigs? It seems likely that Old Firm involvement, already weak in the case of Rangers, is not likely to increase. If international football is to survive it must be at competitive level only, and the Scots should think seriously why they cancel a whole League programme before the visit of San Marino or the Faroe Islands.

Scotland has traded the occasional moment of glory against Europe's finest for the ability to perform respectably there.

Some would see this as a sad falling away but it can also be viewed as pragmatic and sensible.

TIMELINE

1970

Edward Heath's Conservatives win the General Election.

1973

Britain is permitted entry to the European Economic Community.

1974

The SNP takes 11 seats as Labour wins the General Election. Bay City Rollers phenomenon begins.

1975

Margaret Thatcher becomes Conservative Party leader.

1978

Scottish footballing hubris ends in World Cup disaster.

1979

Devolution fails the vote and the Conservatives sweep to power.

1982

British forces recapture part of the Falkland Islands.

1983

The Conservatives win the General Election with just over a quarter of the Scottish vote.

1984

Scottish coal industry is dismantled, causing mass strike action. Steel industry threatened.

1987

June: The Conservatives win the General Election supported by less than one-in-four Scots.

November: Chancellor Nigel Lawson attacks Scotland's 'dependency culture'.

1988

April: Poll Tax introduced to Scotland on April Fool's Day.

July: Campaign for a Scottish Assembly is launched.

November: the SNP wins the Glasgow Govan by-election.

1990

Thatcher resigns as Prime Minister. Glasgow becomes European City of Culture.



Scottish fans pelt their team's bus in the Argentine in 1978.

Modern incomers

They came to Scotland to find better lives - from India, Italy, Poland, Lithuania, China and Chile they came.

They were the new Scots in a rich brew

Scotland has drawn invaders, refugees and immigrants since time immemorial. Over the last century, however, perhaps more refugees and immigrants have arrived in Scotland than during the previous 2,000 years.

The 20th century began with about 8,000 Jews finding refuge in Scotland, having fled from Russia, the Baltic States and Poland to escape religious persecution and economic oppression.

Their settlement in Scotland was facilitated by the local Jewish community who helped them in learning the language and finding the means of earning a living. During the same time about 4,000 Italians came over to join their families who had settled in Scotland in the last quarter of the 19th century.

By 1910, about 5,000 Lithuanians had entered Scotland. They also were fleeing from the tyranny and torment of their Russian rulers.

The Lithuanians found jobs and accommodation in the Lanarkshire industrial belt and in the Lothians and Fife mining areas. Like other immigrants they met hostility and prejudice from the local people who accused them of working for less, lowering living standards and strike breaking.

The arrival of their dependants considerably increased their numbers and by 1914 small Lithuanian colonies had sprung up in many villages of Lothians, Fife and Lanarkshire.

Between the two World Wars the community began to integrate, as many of their young people began marrying local girls and boys. After the Second World War the process of inter-marriages turned their integration into fast assimilation and



■ The Lithuanian bakers: the place is Wishaw, 1901, and these Lithuanians had escaped from poverty and Tsarist oppression. Most found work in the iron and coal industries – but some began their own businesses.

by now they have almost lost their identity.

From the early 19th century, Indian, Chinese and Yemeni seamen employed on British merchant ships were calling at Scottish ports. Also, some Scottish officers of the East India Company returning home brought Indian servants with them.

The latter half of the 19th century

saw a greater number of seamen and servants coming to Scotland. Sooner or later the servants were made redundant and the seamen usually paid off by the shipmasters on reaching British ports.

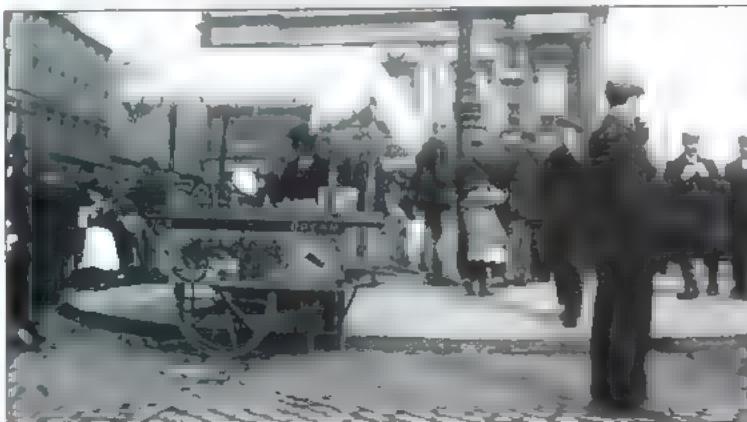
Such unemployed seamen and servants had established 'Lascar (seamen) colonies' in all major Scottish port cities where they

wanted to find other jobs or a passage home. After the First World War, all Indian and other black seamen and soldiers were dismissed to provide jobs for the demobbed Scottish soldiers and seamen. Those who had the means returned to their respective homelands while others resorted to the Lascar colonies.

In desperation to earn a living, an Indian seaman following the Jewish tradition began peddling drapery goods in rural areas around Glasgow. He did well in his new vocation and his compatriots followed suit.

Within a couple of years every Indian seaman and servant was earning a reasonable living as a pedlar, and when it became known in their native land that they were doing well, their relatives and friends began joining them.

By 1930 their numbers had increased to about 100 and some of them began to move out of Glasgow due to the pressures of their increasing numbers in the same trade in one area. By 1939, many



■ Luigi Coletta came from Italy to be an ice cream vendor with his own barrow in the Dundee of 1907. Italians tended to go into catering trades.

who became Scots



■ Daniela Nardini: The attractive star of BBC television's 'This Life' is from a Scots-Italian family.

more had arrived from India with the number of Indian peddlars in Scotland rising to about 400.

Soon after the beginning of the war the supply of their goods of trade dried up and most of them were forced to abandon peddling. Those who had left Glasgow came back. Some joined the armed forces and others enrolled to work in the armament factories.

After the German occupation of Poland in 1939, a large number of Polish soldiers and civilians escaped and offered their services to the Allies. In 1940, a number of regiments of the Polish Army in exile were brought to Scotland for training and the defence of the East Coast.

The Poles had joined the allies hoping that they would receive help to win their freedom. After the War however, international political vested interests frustrated their hopes and they were prevented from returning to their country.

Moreover, they had become quite integrated into the local community during their stay in Scotland and many had married Scottish girls. Because of these family connections their settlement in Scotland became an inevitable affair.

After the War, the Indians who had been working in factories or had joined the armed forces went back to peddling. The disturbances in the



■ Scotland's Mohammad Sarwar became the first Muslim MP in Britain. He is pictured being congratulated on his Govan victory by Labour Party colleague George Galloway at the 1997 General Election.

sub-continent, before and after the independence of India and the creation of Pakistan in 1947, prevented new arrivals for a couple of years. However, by 1950 conditions returned to normal in the two countries and the journeys to Scotland resumed again.

Until the 1950s, few Indian or Pakistani immigrants had ever considered permanent settlement in Scotland. Their aim in coming here was simply to earn enough to enable them to go back and help their families. But during the 1950s, as more immigrants arrived and family unions began, their outlook started to change.

Their pattern of work also saw a change at this stage. Most of the newcomers now were educated young men and Glasgow and Edinburgh Transport Services, desperate for staff, were glad to

recruit them. The Indian and Pakistani staff were glad to be employed in the city centres, as there was little else available to them.

Seamen from other lands set up 'Lascar colonies' while waiting for a job or passage home

the beginning of 1961 it became clear that the Government was actively considering the introduction of such restrictions and this started a rush of immigrants to enter Britain before the impending legislation became law.

Fears of future restrictions on dependants prompted those who had not yet called over their families to get them over. All this resulted in a rapid growth of the Asian community in Scotland.

Chinese seamen had also been part of the Lascar colonies in Scottish port cities during the 19th and early 20th centuries. But the present Chinese community began to arrive in Scotland in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Though they came here from flourishing Chinese centres in English cities, originally all of them had come from Hong Kong. It took them a couple of years to attract the same kind of customers but by 1965 there were restaurants, tea rooms and

came to Britain, a few hundred were directed to Scotland. In the late '70s the British Government also agreed to accept Vietnamese refugees fleeing from Communist South Vietnam, with Scotland receiving about 1,000. Both these groups were looked after by various statutory and voluntary organisations and they appeared to settle in without much difficulty, but most of them eventually left for England to join their relatives and friends.

During the 1970s a few Arab and Palestinian families moved up to Scotland from England and after Khomeini revolution in Iran they also found refuge in Scotland. Their present whereabouts are not known.

Today there are about 100,000 people of Asian origin in Scotland. This is a significant number of Asians in Britain, particularly when compared with the last three decades when the number of Asians coming from England to Scotland was very small.

The last century has witnessed Scotland and become a multi-racial and multi-cultural society. The new Scots make up about three per cent of the total population of the country.

Thus Scotland enters the new millennium as a people who have their origins in numerous races, several cultures and many creeds.

Problems declared by road, rail and air



■ People conveyor: the Kingston Bridge in 1960 was almost ready to ease some of Glasgow's traffic problems at the Clyde crossing

From wandering tribes to city rush hours moving people has posed difficulties. It is a conundrum that governments are reluctant to grasp - but it gets worse

The scientists all now agree that global warming is a fact, and that unless something is done about it the human race is in for a very rough 21st century. In the last week of the old millennium, Hurricane Lothar spelled this out to an appalled Europe.

Most uses of fossil fuel can be controlled by insulation, or improved generating efficiency, or rationing. The one that remains impervious to such controls is Western man - the word MAN emphasised - and his addiction to travel and to the motor car.

This accounts for about 30 per cent of greenhouse gases

produced, and the proportion is rising. 'The monster that we love', in Sir Colin Buchanan's phrase, will eat our children, if not us.

Up to the 1960s, Europeans travelled about 2,000 kilometres per head per year; between then and 1990 this rose fourfold, most of this increased mobility being car trips. Paradoxically, the growth of industry had probably reduced people's travel. Hunter-gatherers and herdspeople covered huge distances; even agriculturalists like crofters had to get to their fields and flocks, and take the latter to market.

Industrial workers, however, usually lived in the shadow of their factories or mines. Only

about seven per cent of them around 1900 did anything but walk to work.

The horse-buses and suburban railways of the Victorian age were very much the preserve of the middle-classes. Yet the roads laid out for them, and the streets centring on stations such as Edinburgh's Morningside or Glasgow's Hyndland, determined the land use of the whole Victorian town.

Commuting for the very well off could be at long range, from Fife or Dunoon to Glasgow, and North Berwick or West Linton to Edinburgh.

On the coalfields there were



■ There they go, the world is shrinking and the Tartan Army takes to the skies to bring support to their team in the Mexico World Cup in 1986.

'paddy trains for some bigger factors' giant Singer sewing works at Clydebank women workers tra Bridgeton, had pri Convicts at Peterhead had their very own spectacles in quarry, where they cut the stone for the harbour's great breakwater.

Even the electric gondola of the people most Scots towns people got after 1900 suburbs rather than the packed working-class areas.

Almost as important, and catering for the same worker, teacher or clerk the safety bicycle, in use in the 1880s and much developed by the Scots Dunlop and Kirkpatrick Fleming

In its way it was revolutionary as it broke down the barriers between the sexes, and loaned itself to political agitation, in the combination of tourism, fun and

Paddy trains for miners, gondolas of the people for suburbs, weird bikes and buggies... they had their day

socialist agitation, which was the on Cycling Club, formed by Robert Blatchford's Clarion weekly

Such radicals became furious after 1900 about the horseless carriage roaring along unmade roads in a cloud of dust. The driving of the very-well off, it may have been taken up by Scots miners, who crafted big machines like Arroll-Johnstons and Daimlers going from 3-5 tons to 25 tons survivors on show in the National Transport Museum as elegant as Cunard or Dunbarton express trains.

The builders would have agreed with the great Gottlieb Daimler that car numbers would be constrained by the lack of chauffeurs: perhaps to 50,000 for

the whole of Germany.

World War I changed all that. Motor-bikes and trucks became essential, and thousands of soldiers learned to drive and maintain them, which would give them ideas for post-war enterprise.

But government still thought along the old lines. It proposed a major programme of railway extension as into rural areas, including narrow-gauge lines on the tracks which had fed the front line.

Arran, Skye and Lewis would have got their lines, though how long they would have kept them was a different matter.

Scotland's few remaining passenger railways at Campbeltown, Rothsay and Leven had gone down to tr

buses by the early 1930s.

Instead a huge network of bus routes developed, often served by solid-tyred bonshakers with an Army background.

They were cheap and convenient, and they made a killing when the trains struck the 'nine days in May' General Strike in 1926.

The reaction of the cash-strapped railways that year and ENR was to buy them up and expand by the Railways Act of 1922 so that the network was a sensible plan.

Consumers disliked this: the railways were unpopular because of their high rates, but the motorists argued that their networks were so uneconomic it was a miracle they were there at all.

Buses took over from trains on a few hundred miles of rural lines to Lauder, Fort Augustus, Moniaive and a combination of diesel ships on 'trunk' routes and ►



■ Production line of cars: the scene at the Roots Linwood factory producing Hillman Imps and Hillman Hunters in the 1960s.

► bus connections were used by the partly railway-owned David MacBrayne to replace their old coastwise steamers

If the 1930s was the golden age of the Clyde steamers, with a new generation of powerful turbines and paddlers – the Queen Mary II and the Jeannie Deans supplanting the 60-year-old Columba and Tona, it was also the decade of the tour bus, boosted partly by holidays with pay (1936) and partly by the 'bona fide traveller' dodge of progressing from one squelching hotel lounge to another.

Cars there were, of course, perhaps 150,000 (counting motor vehicle combinations), or about one in every 40 people. Next-to-none were Scottish Luton and Leyland, Cowley and

elsewhere had seen off the Scottish motor industry.

World War II ran on rails – so much so that people got used to the unending noise of steam engines and the constant tension of battle along the rail lines.

War turned many into art drivers, and also priests, and this time there was the notion that road transport, like cars and aircraft, would belong to the peace-making evident in the regional development plans that the Labour Government

commissioned. At Prestwick the Scots could see what a really big international airport was like, and with a bit of ingenuity a British car might even be purchased.

Car numbers rose 1 to 15 people in 1954, 1 to 7 in 1961, 1 to 5 in 1971, 1 to 2.8 in 1998, with a hiccup around the Suez adventure in 1956.

By 1960 these numbers were

causing a problem, and the low investment on roads was being compared with the guzzling of subsidies by the nationalised railways.

Ernest Marples, a Tory of a type unthinkable in the 1930s, but unquestionably a pushy fellow, solved this by getting Dr Colin Buchanan to preach the joys of motoring, and stepping up the

cash, while buying Dr Richard Beeching from ICI to rationalise the railways.

The motorway programme concentrated too much on Buchanan's expensive urban schemes, while Beeching's bright ideas for retaining freight on rail were overshadowed by his draconian closure programme.

In Scotland, the latter helped



■ Bus to North Berwick, 1930: trams ran in towns, trains linked towns, but the bus served both.



The pedes of 1909 take to the road: members of the Paisley Clarion Cycle Club found even then it was cheaper to go by bike

the forces to the Highlands, etc. Meanwhile, the Caledonian Canal in 1962, a mere advance of a century, sailing was simply no longer.

A rail boom followed Beeching didn't cover two areas: the very successful electric Blue Trains in Glasgow, which started in 1980, and the clever private British Rail rail services, fares which saved the passengers. But in fact, it was a hands down victory for road haulage.

Beeching's Freight, however, which he had staked his career on, were reduced to trips to the docks. Otherwise only a few short routes survived.

The rise of road transport (almost incredibly) defied all sort of reputable history. Perhaps the operators, a notably powerful political group, with a concealed subsidy drastically reducing their

Dr Beeching's plan for great rail freighliners was reduced to trips to the docks

preferred it that was much less defensible was sh airport policy. From the charter holiday flight used air travel Scottish passenger numbers from 664,000 in 1978 and 2,000,000 in 1998. Central Scot and there airports, all lacking rail connections

as have been because air policy was deflected to the north in the 1970s. to the north along the north-sea coast, but it was a major disadvantage. In contrast in the south, literally the same roads. As far as kids were concerned, about 90 per cent walked to school, about 10 per cent in 1995. Even where

it worked, motorised Britain was being criticised for producing homebound, overweight, initiative-less citizens

Yet Scotland's poorest saw little evidence of it. In Glasgow's Easterhouse scheme in 1985 some 20 per cent of the people had a car, in 1995 it was 21 per cent

The situation wasn't improved by the fashionable dogma of privatisation, carried through by Mrs Thatcher's 1985 Transport Act. Bus-mile runs went up by a quarter, but far from boosting use, passenger numbers fell by about the same proportion in a decade.

Rail privatisation produced a fair crop of scandals, still proper to be investigated, but the Scottish set up remained substantially state-controlled. It was impossible

to get a through train from Edinburgh or Glasgow to the Continent, although the losses on the Channel Tunnel dwarfed anything Beeching had dealt with but this was part of an even stranger global picture.

A BBC employee, trapped in a snowstorm on the M8, went to the service area and asked for a sandwich.

"We haven't any," said the lorry that was serving them from Salisbury. "It's all for the *Shap*."

All calls in the area were serviced from a centre in Shropshire, an example of the logistic sector becoming the lifeblood of an industry, in the 1980s and 1990s and began to be logistics centres in the road transport industry aren't even in the British Isles.

Transport has been the endlessly elastic band enabling this sort of organisation to operate at way below its global costs. What happens when the band snaps?

Exciting times as the theatre is reinvented



Katie Murphy, Ida Schuster, Elaine C. Smith and Dorothy Paul get to grips with the washing in Tony Roper's popular play "The Steame"

New work, new approaches, new talents, daring experiments and challenges from the Traverse and Citizens to Perth, Dundee and Pitlochry - Scottish theatre has never been more vital...

1970s, and building work and experience over generations, Scottish theatre has sought to define and create experiences debate and immediate significance, and still celebrated as one of the great Scottish theatre 'The Stag and the Black, Buck' had all these committed to the great entertainment. The company's first play to be produced at McGrath's theatre in Perth, Scotland. It told the story of the secret and secret new cultures from the Clearances to the discovery and the exploitation of North Sea oil, seeing parallels in the economic exploitation of the people and the

land from the 18th century through to the 1970s

The play told its story and underlined its socialist message using a broad range of performance techniques including elements of ceilidh, balladry, lament, fiddle music and Gaelic song, as well as the slapstick, direct address and audience participation associated with the Scotch comedies and the music hall

Although its critical reputation continues to grow, perhaps the most enduring legacy of the production was the revitalisation of the touring tradition within Scottish theatre and the rediscovery of the rural audience ignored by other theatre companies. This one production quite simply created the modern touring circuit in the Highlands and Islands

At times during the early 1970s it seemed as though 784 alone was demonstrating the value of small

scale touring companies in developing and broadening ideas of what Scottish theatre could and should be

However, simultaneously the large city-based theatres were spearheading an astonishing revival of theatre in Scotland, commissioning plays and finding new ways of staging classics

The Lyceum in Edinburgh was established in 1965 as a music hall repertory theatre. Its first artistic director was Tom Flanagan, but he was quickly replaced by Alan Perry, who led the company for a decade of popular writing. Perry gathered around him young directors like Richard Eyre and Bill Bryden and began to commission new plays.

Successes from that time included Bryden's 'Willie Rough' (1972) and 'Benny Lynch' (1974) and Roddy Macmillan's 'The Bevellers' (1973), each performed by a company that reads like a who's who of post war

The mixture of fantasy, realism and nostalgia rarely fails to catch hold of an audience

Scottish acting al...
James Calderwood, Rik...
John Grieve, Vivien Heilbr...
Roddy McMillan, and Ian W...

The same pr...
commissioning new w...
underway at Edinburgh's...
had been founded as a...
venue for international...
avant garde performance. In the...
1970s, and despite the new plays...
being staged at the Lyceum, it was the...
Traverse which became...
Scotland's leading...
venue.

This reputat...
Parr who ran the company from 1973 to 1980 – a period which saw...
premieres of plays by...
Gallagher, Hector MacMillan,...
McGrath, C P Ta...
Byrne. The company's...
directorship was...
Boys Trilogy' ('T...
978, 'Cuttin' a Rug', '...
Still Life', 1981).

This cycle of plays, in particular the first play, has been...
endlessly revived since its original production and still remains...
funny and vivid recollections of Paisley in the 1970s.

At the age of 70, Joan Knight, the...
Scottish actor, director and...
the 25 years of her director...
(from 1968 until 1993), her...
commitment was to the regular...
production of plays in theatre.

At Pitlochry the summer seasons of 'the theatre in the hills' won a...
loyal audience with...
neglected Scottish plays and classics of the British repertoire.
Dundee Rep's commitment to...
classic texts was matched by...
quality work with local...
company established a...
reputation for community...
projects.

Meanwhile, at the Citizens'...
Glasgow, the 'triumvirate' of G...
Havergal, Philip Prowse and Rod...
David MacDonald were...
reinventing what theatre in Scotland...
could be. Sometimes accuse...
ignoring indigenous writing and



A barrel of laughs: roly-poly actor Robbie Coltrane with Katy Murphy during rehearsals for the stage version of *Tutti Frutti*. The man with the guitar on the stair is the remarkable playwright/artist John Byrne.

writers, from 1969 the Citizens' new artistic team challenged the repertoire of theatre in Scotland and reset it within an utterly contemporary and determinedly international zeitgeist.

Their great achievements include a series of radical reinterpretations of plays by William Shakespeare, Bertolt Brecht, Noel Coward and Oscar Wilde, a commitment to the dramas of the whole of Europe (and other plays by Goethe, Schiller, Hochhuth and Goldoni), inventive adaptations of plays by MacDonald (Camille, 1974) and

saving lost its small Close Theatre in 1973, in 1992 the Citizens made the bold decision to create new studio spaces where productions range from classic texts such as 'The Pelican' (1993), 'Look Back in Anger' and 'Song at Twilight'

(both 1995) to daring and provocative one-man shows such as 'Filth' and 'Death in Venice' (both 1999).

The 'Cit'z' main stage continues to be as eclectic as ever with a diversity of productions such as Havergal's witty adaptation of 'Travels with my Aunt' (1992), 'The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore' (1994) with Rupert Everett as Flora Golworth, and a production of 'The Homecoming' (1998) that reminded audiences of the astonishing power and violence of Pinter's world.

If the new writing promoted by the Lyceum and the Traverse in the 1970s seemed mostly to favour male writers, the late 1980s and 1990s saw a flourishing of writing by women in Scottish theatre.

The arrival of Liz Lochhead, in particular, her play 'Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off' (1987),

new opportunities of women writers when it was premiered by Gerry Mulgrew's Communicado in 1987.

Since then Lochhead's 'Dracula' (1985) and 'Perfect Days' (1998), Sue Glover's 'The Straw Chair' (1988) and 'Bondagers' (1991), Roma Munro's 'Bold Girls' (1990); and 'The Maiden Stone' (1995) have won over audiences and critics alike with their mixing of fantasy, realism and humour. These same three elements combined in one of the most phenomenally popular plays ever to be produced in Scotland, Tony Roper's 'The Stearne' (1987).

Recent Scottish drama has challenged many of our previous assumptions about writing for, and in, theatre in Scotland.

This is not restricted to the subject matter of the plays but extends to the relationship of the writer to the company. In the 1980s and 1990s new writing has continued to be supported in the established contexts of the Traverse

responsible for premieres of work by

Glover, Munro, David Greig, David Harrower, and others – and

7:84 with premieres of work by

Munro, Jackie Kay, Stephen

Greenhorn and Greig.

However, there has also emerged a vital collection of newer, smaller touring companies. Many of these companies have been founded by and operate with a resident writer and/or writer/director – for example, John Binnie and Aileen Ritchie at Clyde Unity, David Greig with Suspect Culture, Nicola

McCartney with Look Out – who

along with energetic and innovative companies like Communicado, Theatre Babel and Theatre C – and companies for children and young people such as TAG, Visit Fictions and Hopscotch – have combined to produce a rich and exciting range of theatre across the whole of Scotland.

Still it remains the traditional Christmas pantomime that commands the most warmth and passion in Scotland.

Stanley Baxter, Walter Kerr, Rik Mayall and others have...
in the 1980s and 1990s by Alan Gray, Alan...
and Elaine C Smith...
Alan Gray...
the tradition of...
mic acting and popular...
performance is being revitalised by...
ers like Greg Hemphill and...
Paul Kieran who made their...
pantomime debut in 'Mother Goose' at the King's in Glasgow in 1999.

Thatcher's legacy: a Scottish Tory void



The crash of steel: final demolition of the symbolic Ravenscraig works in 1996 marks the end of one of Scotland's most important old industries.

The issue of Scotland's constitutional status has once more taken centre stage. It is the last thing Margaret Thatcher wanted, yet she above all contrived to make it happen

After years of decline, 1979 was a good year for the Conservatives in Scotland. They had campaigned against the Labour Government's proposals in the 1979 election and seen a large poll lead for the opposition reduced to the narrowest of margins. Though a small majority had been recorded for Devolution, it was insufficient to overcome the hurdle set by Parliament that 40 per cent of the eligible electorate had to vote for it.

The Tories could take pride in the contribution they had made to the defeat of Devolution. Weeks later, under Margaret Thatcher's leadership, they romped home to victory in the General Election. In

Scotland, the party won back seats it had previously lost and appeared on course for recovery. This seemed to be confirmed in the first direct elections to the European Parliament when the Tories won five of Scotland's eight seats.

However, 1979 proved to be a false dawn for the Conservatives and while it was the beginning of 18 years of Conservative Government, during which time Scotland and the UK changed dramatically, it was a period of absolute decline in Scottish Tory fortunes, which culminated in the defeat of all remaining Tory MPs in 1997 and with no Scottish councils under the party's control.

But, as Margaret Thatcher herself noted in her memoirs, Thatcherism

may have been unpopular in Scotland but its effect on the make-up of Scotland including, indeed, its politics was huge.

"There was no Tartan Thatcherite revolution. The balance sheet of Thatcherism in Scotland is a lopsided one, economically positive but politically negative," wrote Margaret Thatcher in her book, 'The Downing Street Years.'

A key plank in the Tories' 1979 manifesto had been its commitment to the sale of council houses. The proportion of council houses in Scotland was great by any standards. Conservative politicians were fond of pointing out at this stage that there were proportionately more privately owned or rented houses in many



■ Triumphant First Lady: Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher receives the adulation of her party a year after winning the 1979 election.

Economically positive but politically negative was Thatcher's own assessment

communist countries than there were in Scotland

The policy of council house sales succeeded through generous incentives – in the form of an all-down prices and mortgage loans and disincentives by starving local housing of funds. What puzzled the Tories, including Mrs Thatcher, was that Scots were willing to take

advantage of their policies – by buying their council houses for example – but refused to credit the Conservatives with their support. Privatisation took other forms, in Scotland. Industries which had been staples of the Scottish economy were sold off after being privatised, a process of shedding jobs to make them attractive to foreign investors.

At the start of the Thatcher years, industries such as steel and coal were still strong in economically and socially weighty forces in the labour movement and the Labour Party in Scotland. The rundown of these industries therefore had both economic and political consequences. In the short term, the social effects of the closures of steel plants as far as

dependent on these industries

The most bitter industrial battle of the Thatcher years was the coal strike of 1984/85. The steel unions had refused to co-operate with the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and allow steel plants in Scotland to be closed down, for fear that once the great steel making smelters in Lanarkshire stopped working they could never start again.

Thatcher had succeeded in dividing the trade unions but had no intention of repaying the debt she owed to the steel workers whose refusal to support the NUM had helped her defeat the miners. Less bitter, but no less significant and as poignant were the subsequent changes in the steel industry. After initial hesitation, the Conservatives set about privatising Scotland's steel

industry and closed the Cartvale steel strip mill in 1985 and the Ravenscraig in 1993.

The political backlash against the Conservatives was strongest in Scotland, far beyond what was intended at the time. The measures she had taken to impose restraint on the Conservatives were more than counteracting against Scotland's steel industry. Not only did the latter fail to be brought of as at best indifferent to Scottish interests and at worst hostile, it also alienated public opinion.

A transformation in the role of the state was emerging under the Conservatives. From the end of the Second World War government took responsibility for ensuring that unemployment was kept to a



■ Traditional salute: lorry drivers ferry coal to Ravenscraig during the 1984 Miners' Strike when fearful steel unions did not lend support.

The Poll Tax merely made Scots believe they were being unfairly used as guinea pigs

minimum by having a direct interventionist role

Under the Conservatives, this changed dramatically as government denied it had the ability to intervene effectively. The social consequences of this transformation were evident in a dramatic increase in the gap between rich and poor. In time, Labour came to accept this more limited role for government. In this sense, Thatcherism was politically successful even in Scotland.

Margaret Thatcher had interpreted the result of the 1979 Devolution referendum as evidence that Scots might claim to want a Parliament when asked by pollsters, but when faced with a real poll they would balk at the prospect. Her interpretation was widely shared in the early 1980s

even by some supporters of Home Rule

For most of the 1980s, Devolution was a relatively minor issue in Scottish politics. However, it took on a new significance during the Thatcher years as many Scots concluded that even a Parliament with limited powers, which was unlikely to return a Conservative majority, might be used to block Thatcherite policies.

The culmination of this came with the introduction of the Poll Tax, a flat-rate tax replacing domestic rates in Scotland. Rates were set to rise and hit those living in larger houses in Scotland, the Scottish Tories' natural constituency of support. The opposition to these changes and demand for an alternative was articulated powerfully at the Scottish Conservative conference in May, 1985.

The prospect of losing even more support forced the leadership to introduce the Poll Tax, a panic measure which had earlier been rejected by the Thatcher Cabinet as unworkable. For many Scots the Poll Tax, introduced in Scotland a year ahead of English devolution, was

the Conservative's treatment of Scotland

Scotland, it was felt, was being treated as a guinea pig with this unfair measure designed to help the rich at the expense of the poor.

Mass demonstrations and a non-payment campaign, organised by a revived Scottish National Party, kept the Poll Tax centre-stage and ensured

that constitutional change became entwined with left-right politics.

Whereas support for a Scottish Parliament had been fairly diffuse, it became associated with a broad left coalition from the late 1980s and in particular anti-Tory politics.

To a remarkable extent to be anti-Conservative came to be almost synonymous with support for



■ Serious mood: hard times for Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind sharing a Tory Party platform with Secretary of State Michael Forsyth.



The placard says it all: anti-poll tax protesters are not for turning.

Devolution. Whether justified or not, the perception that the Conservatives were anti-Scottish had developed and Mrs Thatcher herself was seen to personify this. Her support for the poll tax support dwindled away.

Enterprise and Conservative Government under Margaret Thatcher. She and senior members of her g

including Nigel Lawson, who served for a period as Chancellor of the Exchequer, were frustrated by what they saw as an anti-enterprise culture that existed north of the Border.

In 1988, she invited herself to address the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and delivered what became known as the 'Sermon on the Mound'. Her interpretation of the story of the Good Samaritan

according to Mrs Thatcher, the Samaritan had wealth to enable him to help others caused offence and only served to alienate her further from many Scots who in earlier generations might have been thought of as natural Tories.

Scotland's constitutional status may have come to the fore again without Mrs Thatcher, but there is no doubt that her presence in Downing Street helped this happen. The Campaign for a Scottish Assembly (CSA) was founded in 1980 on the anniversary of the failed Devolution referendum and a few valiant individuals tried to keep the issue alive in the early 1980s.

The Scottish media paid little attention to Devolution though each of the opposition parties – Labour, the Liberals and successors, and the Scottish National Party – remained committed to a Scottish Parliament of some kind.

Devolution was given a new lease of life, as was the SNP, by Mrs Thatcher. The CSA's proposals for a cross-party constitutional convention to discuss Scotland's place in the Union attracted support in the late 1980s when the Poll Tax became a major issue.

The SNP, which had languished in the polls for most of the 1980s, used the Poll Tax skilfully and also took

advantage of changes in European politics when it launched its policy of Independence in Europe in 1988. The issue of Scotland's constitutional status had returned centre stage.

No single individual can be credited (or blamed) for this more than Margaret Thatcher. Even her departure did not remove the issue. Such was the feeling that had built up that the efforts of John Major, her successor, failed to prevent the momentum from growing until, seven years after she stood down, Scotland threw out all remaining Scottish Conservative MPs at the General Election – and voted overwhelmingly in favour of Devolution in a second referendum.

The Thatcher years transformed Scottish politics in a number of ways. The Scottish Conservative Party, which had been Scotland's largest party in the 1955 General Election, saw its decline accelerate under her leadership. Constitutionally, her leadership of the country acted as a focal point around which grievances about the way Scotland was governed gathered.

A Scottish Parliament became the solution to the problem of Margaret Thatcher.

Tories slip in Scotland

The modern Conservative or Tory Party was forged in 1834 by Robert Peel (1788-1850) when he linked a programme of industrial reform with traditional notions of respect for long-established institutions, an ideology that still has echoes within the Party today.

The Great Reform Act of two years previously benefited the Liberals at massive Tory expense and the Party reached an all-time low in the 1850s when it all but collapsed.

A fresh approach was adopted in advance of the Second Reform Act, making efforts to court industrial workers with bodies such as the Glasgow Working Men's Conservative Association.

Benjamin Disraeli (1804-81)

promoting a programme of social reform relevant to Scotland.

The Party did well in the 1874 elections, managing to break the Liberal monopoly in Glasgow with one MP.

Scotland remained distrustful of Conservatism until the split in Liberal ranks over Irish Home Rule in the late 1880s.

This worked to the advantage of the Tories, who came increasingly to be associated with Unionism – Irish and Scottish.

However, while the Party held power at Westminster for over a decade after 1895 under Salisbury (1830-1903) and Balfour (1848-1930) it had thin support north of the border.

The Party returned only

eight Scottish MPs at the 1906 elections but, with the addition of Liberal Unionist support, commanded 38 per cent of the Scottish vote.

When in power during the Depression of the inter-war years, the Conservative and Unionist Party in Scotland demonstrated something of a reformist agenda.

Walter Elliot (1885-1958) at the Scottish Office was chief contributor to a far-reaching reform of central and local government.

In 1945, while Labour scored a British landslide, Scotland still returned 25 Unionist MPs, giving the Party 37 per cent of the vote.

Stressing its commitment to the Union, the Party was a dominant force in Scotland during the 1950s and

remained strong until the late 1960s.

The rise of the Scottish National Party in the 1970s provided a new challenge for the Party to face.

Margaret Thatcher led the Party into government in 1979.

Thatcher introduced a string of policies that proved extremely unpopular in Scotland. More damagingly, the Party created a deepening impression of insensitivity to Scottish issues.

Support for the Party waned further in the 1990s under John Major, culminating in a complete Scottish wipe-out at the 1997 General Election and a poor showing the following year at the Elections to the European Parliament.

The energy vision that lost its way

It was hailed as the space-age power of the future. Then the image became tarnished, public confidence dented. But still Scotland lies at the heart of Britain's nuclear military strategy

There were two nuclear strands in post-war Scotland. One was civilian energy which, in its early years, was warmly welcomed as providing jobs, cheap energy for Scotland in the most modern technology. In the 1970s opinion on the significance of nuclear energy had ceased to be as benign.

The second strand, nuclear weapons, was always controversial and polarised Scottish opinion between those who were strongly opposed and those who accepted 'deterrent' arguments promoted by both Conservative and Labour governments.

Had the Scottish people been informed of the hidden agenda behind the nuclear power programme, the initial welcome might have been distinctly cooler. In 1955 work was started on the first experimental fast breeder reactor at Dounreay, 10 miles from Thurso.

De-classified documents from the Ministry of Supply to the Scottish Health Department in 1953 stated that in view of the risk of accidental contamination 'it is undesirable that the factory should be located within some miles of any town and it should be a considerable distance from a large town.'

In a lecture given at Strathclyde University in 1977, Lord



■ Heading for the seabed: nuclear submarine HMS Churchill leaves its Faslane base.

Hinton, previously head of civilian power research, described how they 'scrutinised' implications about the TV which might be released if an accident to justify the Dounreay site. They also reveal that the UK Atomic Energy Authority considered building a nuclear reactor and letting the US control 'to find out what happened.'

The site was identified as an appropriate site for this. The idea was backed by the local MP, Sir Archibald Sinclair, who said that a staged nuclear accident in a thinly populated district like the Highlands would 'give information of tremendous value.'

Although referred to as a civilian research plant, Dounreay has been involved in nuclear submarine test projects since 1957 and a modernised test facility for Trident was built in 1982 at a cost of £100 million.

In 1958, Chapelcross near

Dumfries was built supposedly as a civil nuclear energy plant. This was the story which was presented to the public. The reality was rather different.

Electricity generation was a by-product of its primary purpose which was to produce plutonium for British nuclear weapons. In 1980 its military role was expanded when a tritium plant was built.

Chapelcross is the second oldest of the British reactors and it is this military role which has ensured its survival.

Hunterston B in Ayrshire, one of the advanced gas-cooled reactors, was started in the late 1960s, but it was the proposal in 1977 for a new plant at Torness near Dunbar which for the first time produced serious opposition to nuclear power in Scotland.

The growth of environmental movements in the course of the 1970s in the US, Germany and Scandinavia had strengthened similar but smaller

developments in Britain. This had produced a much more critical and well informed attitude towards nuclear power than there had been previously.

The Scottish National Party had taken a position in opposition to the further expansion of nuclear power plants. The combination of local objections on amenity grounds, criticisms of the economic rationale for the plant and environmental objections produced serious public debate on the issue.

There were demonstrations and a protest camp was set up on the proposed site. Although the Torness development went ahead, it was in many ways a watershed in the Scottish debate.

There was now a sceptical public. It had been possible to keep previous serious accidents at Windscale-Sellafield secret, but the accident in 1979 at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant in the US and, above all, at Chernobyl in 1986, were out

A feeling was abroad London had foisted a dangerous base on Scotland without consent

in the open. There was no infallibility. In the year 2000 there are still restrictions on the sale of sheep from 20 farms in Scotland because of the levels of radiation in the soil from the Chernobyl accident.

A new front related to the nuclear power issue opened up in Scotland at the start of the 1980s. The first indication of the future plans of the UK Atomic Energy Authority came in 1977 with a report suggesting that they were particularly interested in Mullwharchar if there was a share for storing high-level radioactive waste.

There was strong opposition expressed at the Public Inquiry on the Mullwharchar proposal. This proposal was withdrawn but the issue resurfaced when Nirex, the company established by the industry to tackle nuclear waste disposal, started a consultation exercise in 1987 to find sites for intermediate grade waste.

There were sites in the Scottish Highlands which looked as if they were high on the list. A vigorous campaign gained wide public sympathy and was a factor in Nirex's strategy reconsidertion.

The other major strand in Scotland's nuclear history was the explicitly military one. While some groups in Scotland, like the Iona Community under George McLeod's leadership and some on the political Left, had expressed opposition to nuclear weapons and atmospheric testing from 1952, when Britain tested its first atomic bomb, there was not a movement focusing primarily on this issue.

Even when the Campaign for



Nuclear submarine HMS Conqueror flies the cross-submarines of the Jolly Roger as it enters the Holy Loch after sinking the Argentine battleship General Belgrano during the South Atlantic Falklands War.

Nuclear Disarmament (CND) was initiated in London in 1958, the formation of branches in Scotland was slow. It was the agreement by the British government in 1960 to give the US a base at the Holy Loch, beside Dunoon, for its Polaris submarines which stirred up action in Scotland.

The early Polaris missiles had a short range which required a European base. This decision triggered opposition on a variety of fronts. For those opposed to nuclear weapons this was a concrete focal point for protest, more accessible than Aldermaston and it represented an acceleration of the arms race in Europe.

The decision had outraged many

because it was so close to the largest centres of population in Scotland and such a site would not have been permitted in the US because of this proximity.

Although this was a period with no significant nationalist political movement, there was a distinct nationalist strand in the opposition: the feeling that a London government had foisted a dangerous base on Scotland without any consultation or consent. An alliance of people from churches and unions and political parties was formed to co-ordinate the campaign.

There were cultural demonstrations in Glasgow Trades Council and Scottish CND in 1961 and 1962. Major civil disobedience demonstrations in the form of sit-ins at the base organised by the Direct Action Committee and the Committee of 100. There were hundreds of arrests.

One interesting cultural strand in this Holy Loch campaign, was the production of a repertoire of Scottish dialect peace movement songs such as 'The Glasgow Eskimos' and 'Ding Dong Dollar'. These were humourous and irreverent and in retrospect perhaps held a hint of the stronger Scottish political perspective which was to develop a few years later.

There was, of course, another

view of the Holy Loch base at that time. There were those in Scotland who approved of nuclear weapons and the need to keep the support of the Americans. There was also local support by those in the area who hoped there would be more business and more jobs.

The campaign did not stop the Holy Loch base. It continued until the 1990s when the US government withdrew as part of a cost-cutting exercise and because strategically it no longer required it.

Attention shifted in 1962 to the proposed British nuclear base at Faslane. There was hope among peace movement activists, including many in the Labour Party, that a change of government after the 1964 General Election, when Labour came to power, would halt the plans, but it was that government which completed the Faslane base.

The next major development on the nuclear military front was the announcement in 1981 of a ten-fold expansion of the Coulport base to cover almost 3,000 acres of the Rosneath peninsula for a base for Trident submarines. Britain was to buy the missiles from the US and the Coulport/Faslane complex was confirmed as the UK's principal nuclear military base.

This development was proposed at a time when there was growing concern about Cold War escalation and a rapid increase in support for CND. In the UK focused on Cruise missiles and Greenham Common.

Campaigning activity in Scotland was much greater than it had ever been. Most towns had CND groups and Labour Party, SNP and some Liberal activists co-operated.

Although the official policy of the Scottish Labour Party has remained opposed to Trident, the change of Labour Party policy, the completion of the base and commissioning of the submarines took the momentum out of the campaign.

A cheap and infinite fuel supply was the vision of nuclear power presented to the public in the mid 20th century. By the end of the century this vision had been discredited. The risk of radiation leakage, the problems of waste disposal, and the high economic costs of de-commissioning, had altered attitudes.

The Dounreay fast-breeder reactor project ended unsuccessfully and it is now unlikely there will be another nuclear power plant built in Scotland. But Scotland's military nuclear role remains central to the UK's nuclear strategy. Britain's future as a nuclear power now depends on Scotland continuing to accept the Coulport Trident base.



Four towers of Chapel Cross nuclear power station.



Teletubby wonders: Especially if you are little Caroline MacKinnon on the Isle of Canna and full-time electricity fails to arrive in the year 2000.

Age of everything to do, everywhere to go

Scots scan the internet, play their computer games, drive alone to work, distance themselves from neighbours and watch TV channels galore in family silence. But is it better than the community-based amusements of even 50 years ago?

Leisure increased in 20th century Scotland to such an extent that it has now become one of the nation's most important industries. Not only has the number of ways in which people can find pleasure and amusement grown out of all recognition, but so too has the amount of time and resources which individuals are prepared to devote to leisure activities.

Amusement and enjoyment has been democratised throughout the 20th century as the moral censure of the churches has relaxed and the spending power of the vast majority has increased, which means that the pleasures of the few 100 years ago, such as foreign travel, have become the pleasures of the many.

Technology has revolutionised the way we amuse ourselves and the predominant theme of the last 100 years has been a shift away from community to the individual. Put

crudely, our ancestors enjoyed themselves in the ways that people in 'Eastenders' do by socialising together as a community, while today we sit at home as individuals and watch it on television.

Popular culture and the leisure activities of the working class were a source of anxiety for the nation's moral guardians. In keeping with Victorian sensibilities, past-times were divided into two categories respectable and unrespectable.

Morally uplifting and beneficial hobbies such as gardening, playing music, model-building and reading 'good' literature were deemed to be 'rational recreation' because they improved the character.

Unrespectable behaviour such as drinking, gambling and wild and irresponsible behaviour were believed to threaten the nation's moral fabric and had to be controlled and monitored.

Faxation during World War One

was the key factor in reducing the consumption of alcohol. Originally designed as a short-term measure to curb the number of days missed in the munitions factories as a result of hangovers, it proved too handy a source of revenue, while maintaining the moral benefits of public sobriety, to be dropped.

Gambling proved more difficult to eradicate. Campaigners, such as the Rev James Barr railed against what he believed to be a moral epidemic in Scotland in the inter-war era. Gambling was described as an addiction which impoverished families and left social misery in its wake.

Barr and the moral reformers, however, failed to understand the psychology of having a flutter in Scotland. Most gambling was controlled, with a set amount of money earmarked for the pursuit.

Also, far from being an irrational faith in Lady Luck, most betting was

Kids kept an eye open for the 'bookies' in case of passing policemen and acted as runners

Punters avidly read the ~~newspaper's~~ pages to study the form of the horses and dogs in order to maximise their chances. Indeed, the skill to pick winners was a talent which was, and still is, widely respected in Scotland.

Although gambling was permitted in clubs, they were out of reach of most members of the working class and alternative means had to be found to circumvent the watchful eyes of the authorities.

A whole range of gambling networks existed in inter-war Scotland where local newsagents, shopkeepers and ~~innkeepers~~ dens provided a forum for having a flutter. Kids, the 'bookies' runners, would take betting ~~money~~ and from customers and keep a watchful eye out for policemen. In homes and in backyards, cards and pitch and toss also provided a forum for smaller scale gambling. Card playing on Sundays was a particular source of grievance for church leaders.

Local councils had a range of legislation which they could apply to keep rowdy behaviour in check. Theatres, pubs and clubs needed a license and complaints from residents could see it revoked.

Ice cream shops and cafes were targeted as sources of nuisance because the young would congregate there and fears were raised as to the potentially morally-corrupting



■ Height of fashion: teenagers in the '60s go on clothes parade.

effects of young men and women meeting without due supervision. Dance Halls and, in particular, the import of decadent, American Jazz, was seen as another potential threat to the corruption of youth.

The outbreak of gang violence in Glasgow in the 1930s was blamed on the deterioration of the moral fabric of the nation due to lack of parental control and the baleful influence of 'trashy' American music and films. In an effort to hold back the tide of 'filth' and reassert strict moral control, Sir John Cargill was given special dispensation to give the young offenders locked up in

Barlinnie a good thrashing with his hairbrush!

For most Scots in the inter-war period amusement centred around the community. Pastimes were shared with neighbours and workmates. Bands were formed in the workplace, gardening took place in community allotments, men chatted, drank and fell over in the local pub, women chatted and worked in the closes, back greens and steamies.

Work and community were closely related and workers and their families would go away together on holidays and day trips. Children played communal games together with skipping ropes, chalk and imagination as the key elements in their world.

Sport and commercialisation went hand-in-hand with football emerging as the national obsession in the inter-war era. Cricket, quoiting, rugby and to a lesser extent, boxing, were eclipsed by the growth of the 'beautiful game'. Footballers and boxers were idolised by working class boys in a world in which there was little opportunity for social advancement.

The advent of the affluent society in the 1950s led to the decline in community-based popular culture. Improvements in technology and with more people with money to acquire it changed the way people amused themselves.

Perhaps the biggest change was in

the impact of domestic technology on the lives of women. Housework before the advent of washing machines, vacuum cleaners and refrigerators was backbreaking and time consuming. Less time on household chores (Scottish men were not forthcoming at helping out in the house) meant more time for leisure, although much of that was taken away with part-time work.

Televisions, many bought to watch the coronation of Queen Elizabeth, gradually replaced the radio as the focus of family entertainment in the home and proved to be more compulsive. Cars increased mobility with families going out on their own rather than as a group. Hi-Fi's and record collections were an important recreation for many and helped to confine pleasure to the home rather than the community.

Cheap foreign travel meant that holidays were increasingly taken abroad and 'keeping up with the Jones's' in the consumer era meant that many Scottish families' contact with one another was confined to comparing and contrasting their respective material prosperity.

Youth also helped to splinter the old community values as a generation with greater purchasing power than at any time in history forged its own distinctive culture. Record and film companies, clothes manufacturers and marketing agencies were not slow to realise the potential of this new market.

A real generation gap did exist. The youth of the 1960s, as their parents never tired of telling them, had more money, opportunities and advantages than they ever had.

Increased social mobility, a greater inclination to move away from home to find work and the advent of 'new towns' helped to change the Scottish social fabric and destroy the old communitarian values which had sustained it.

The decline of conventional morality accompanied new changes in lifestyles as widespread contraception encouraged sex before marriage. Rising material expectations gave greater life expectations and divorce rates rose in the 1970s and 80s as couples felt free to dissolve unhappy partnerships.

By the end of the 1990s, Scotland, like the rest of the modern world, had undergone the 'atomisation' of society in which the individual was now the main focus of pleasure and recreation. Computer games, the internet, satellite TV, the solitary drive to work in the morning, not knowing your neighbours and living far away from your family are about as different as could be from the lives most Scots lived not more than 50 years ago.



■ Gang fight: the crowds scatter in Tollcross Road, Glasgow, as trouble breaks out in 1933 – the fault of the 'deteriorating moral fabric' of the nation.

The poetic secret agent who vanished



■ 'The Maiden' beheading machine was made in 1564 and was the only one of its kind in Scotland. As a one-stroke job it was more efficient than the axe. It 'caressed' around 100 necks a year in Edinburgh, among them the Regent Morton's.

Dirty-doings by spies in the 16th century were commonplace. Take Alexander Montgomerie, master of intrigue. He tried to make Ailsa Craig an invasion base. Then vanished as cleanly as Lord Lucan

When was he born and when did he die? These unknown dates are only part of the mystery surrounding the life of Alexander Montgomerie, the secret agent who was James VI's double agent and the king's spy. He was a dabbler in the murky world of 16th century intrigue.

Would it be stretching a point to call him a secret agent, a spy? Surely not, for because he was a staunch Catholic, Montgomerie was clearly an instrument that

James could use in troubled times. And these times were confusing. James had been baptised a Catholic but was educated at a Protestant school in France, where he learned to despise his native country.

When he was finally given charge of his own destiny at the age of 14, his court in Edinburgh was riven by religious and political conspiracies.

Alexander Montgomerie joined the court at Holyrood around 1577 as a young man of about 21. Born at Hessilhead Castle in

Ayrshire around 1556. He was the second son of a minor landowner related to the powerful Eglinton family. The poetry he was later to write showed evidence of a classical education, and he is thought to have received this in Argyllshire, which led to a rival poet giving him the scathing Latin nickname of 'Eques Montanus' (the Highland trooper).

He joined the royal court in the service of the Regent Morton, an arch-supporter of the Reformation. Yet Montgomerie had converted to the Catholic faith and, it has been said, 'adhered to the religion of his choice with fanatical enthusiasm'.

Then Morton was dubiously impeached in 1580 for the murder of Darnley – the husband of Queen Mary, James's mother – and was found guilty and beheaded with the 'Maiden'. Scotland's equally efficient version of the French guillotine, which Morton himself had introduced to the country. Such ironies were not unusual in those years of religious term.

With Morton gone, Montgomerie was kept on at court by King James. He had become a favourite through his poetry, and indeed he was one of the country's finest poets during a lean period for Scots literature. James regarded him as his poet laureate, 'maistre of our art', and a man who inspired and encouraged the king's own lesser talents in 'poesie'.

But first we should look at Alexander Montgomerie's double

There were plots and counter plots. Queen Elizabeth in England had her own spies placed

life as a secret agent and the background to his involvement.

James's court favourites included his French-born cousin Esme Stewart, Sire d'Aubigny, with whom James was more than slightly besotted. The Frenchman, who was made Duke of Lennox by James, was regarded by the king's Protestant advisers as an emissary of the Pope, aiming to restore the 'old religion' in Scotland.

There were plots and rumours of plots. Queen Elizabeth of England had her own secret agents in place, and they told her of a plan to convert James back to Catholicism or else abduct him to France.

She countered by threatening to abduct him to England. But the most serious threat of religious intervention came from Spain. King Philip II wanted to encourage the Catholic activists and drive a wedge between the royal house of Scotland and that of his enemy in England.

Part of the plan was to have King James married to the Infanta, Philip's daughter. The Spanish king's agents in Scotland reported that the country was ripe for religious takeover, spurred by force of arms.

One informant, Cardinal de Granville, wrote to him: "The forces required by the Scots Catholics are very limited. They will be satisfied with 2,000 Italians. Doubtless His Holiness will willingly contribute to half the expense or more."

All that is known of Alexander Montgomerie's involvement in these machinations was pretty murky: he was, after all, a secret agent and hardly likely to broadcast his doings. In 1581 he helped to buy a ship, the Bonaventor, "for use in Jesuit intrigue". This became known some years later when there was a legal dispute over the purchase.

In 1586, Montgomerie travelled to Flanders and on to Spain, but what he secretly negotiated there at Philip's court has never been revealed. The following year he



The strange 'Isle of Guyanna', otherwise the code name for Ailsa Craig, was planned as a Catholic launch base for invasion. Montgomerie was charged with treason. The drawing is by Sir John D Clerk of Penicuik.

was apparently the commander of a Scots barque which was intercepted by an English vessel.

The purpose of his voyage, whether it was carrying troops or contraband, has never been explained. But Montgomerie ended up in an English prison, charged with piracy, and stayed there until Queen Mary (a vital focus of Spain's plotting) had been executed at Fotheringay.

The poet-plotter broke cover in a big way in 1595. He teamed up with Hew Barclay of Ladyland, a prominent Catholic activist, in a scheme to take over the massive rock of Ailsa Craig off the Ayrshire coast. The idea was to establish a base there for a Catholic invasion.

The strange code name for this operation was 'Isle of Guyanna', which would have put any infiltrator well off the track. Yet infiltrators there surely were and the conspiracy was discovered.

Presumably it must have been reported to Queen Elizabeth, for it was an English ship that appeared off Ailsa Craig to nip the plot in the bud. At that time,

Montgomerie and some associates had gone hunting on the island of Arran, but Hew Barclay had stayed behind. He drowned himself rather than submit to captivity.

By this time, King James VI of Scotland had in his nostrils the alluring scent of becoming also James I of England. It's more than likely that he didn't want his chances diminished by open support of Catholic plots. So Montgomerie was abandoned to take his own chances.

He was summoned by the Privy Council to answer charges of treason, failed to appear, and was 'put to the horn' – declared an outlaw. It's almost certain that Montgomerie went into exile but, as far as the annals of history are concerned, he disappeared as efficiently as Lord Lucan. He may have lived until 1611, but there is no record of where or when he died.

The best-known poetic work he left behind was 'The Cherrie and the Slae', an allegorical piece in which he debates whether he should eat the accessible but bitter-tasting sloe or try to reach

the sweet cherry on the cliff. This is readily interpreted as an analogy of his times, with the cherry as his chosen religion and unreachable principles.

There are many other poems, including 'Adieu to his Mistress', which was set to music, establishing his poetic talent. The loss of his 'laureate' was touchingly mourned by James VI long before there was any certainty of his death. The king wrote a sonnet which opened:

What drowsy sleep dash stile your eyes, allace!
Ye sacred brethen of Castalian band?
And shall the prince of Poets in our land
Go thus to grave unmourned in any case?

Did Alexander Montgomerie actually survive to read this regal obituary? Maybe he did. A later edition of 'The Cherrie and the Slae' suggests condemnation of the king's double-dealing.

But whether or not those changes were actually made by the poet may never be known. That's the secret service for you. ■

No excuse for not knowing the story of Scotland



If you don't know the past then you cannot read the future, says biker historian David Ross. But today there has never been so many good books on Scotland

At school I was taught history from the English point of view. Like everyone in Scotland, when asked: "When was the Battle of Hastings?" I could immediately reply – "1066". I also learned about the Wars of the Roses and the Magna Carta. None of these topics had anything to do with Scotland. The martyrdom of Wallace and the astonishing achievements of Bruce's reign were quickly skimmed over.

When I left school I discovered the books of the late Nigel Tranter, and as there are over 100 titles by the man, my voracious appetite for reading them was rewarded by a grounding of what had actually occurred in Scotland's past.

Tranter made me want to read academic history texts, and these were read whenever I discovered them. I moved on to other writers who wrote in a particularly Scottish vein, John Prebble for instance. I mention this because I am writing for Scotland's Story, and I tend to write about places to visit in our little country, but Scotland, the country, and Scotland's history, are inextricably intertwined.

We may live in a technological age, but the landscape of our nation is still discernably the same as that which Calgacus knew, that Wallace and Bruce knew, that Tranter knew. The Southern Uplands and the Border land are still laid out as the reivers knew it, and the Tweed still runs as it did when the army of James IV crossed en route to the disaster of Flodden. The central belt has its battle sites like Bannockburn and Stirling Bridge and in the north the



■ Highland charge: a scene from the BBC's 1964 documentary on the Battle of Culloden. The 'extras' were local Inverness folk who came face-to-face with their own history. Now history films and books are everywhere.

glens where Charles Edward Stuart hid from pursuing Hanoverians still stand basically unchanged.

What has changed in the past few decades is the interest and understanding of our past. Writers like Tranter opened up our national memory, and our historic abbeys, castles, battle sites and birthplaces are teeming with visitors like never before. The mountain country has opened up and many thousands now take to the hills for recreation.

There are only five million people living in Scotland today, but Tranter's books are familiar to many more than this figure.

Therefore these books are opening up Scotland to a much wider audience, many of them of Scots ancestry in the Americas and Australia.

A knowledge of our past lets us know where we are going – how do you know your destination if you don't know where you left from? And it is fact that in the latter half of the 20th century so many books emerged that covered every aspect of Scotland's culture that they could only serve to educate people about Scotland.

As a writer, I make many appearances in book shops to do talks and slide shows, and I hear the staff say again and again that over the past few years

history books just fly off the shelves.

The film 'Braveheart' helped dramatically. Many were quick to point out its inaccuracies, but it started a rush to learn more, and that can only be a good thing. It brought Wallace to a new generation. The knock-on effect of all this is, of course, the Scottish Parliament. Increased awareness brought on increased calls for its return.

Knowledge is power. So do yourself a favour and visit some of our historic attractions. They are part of the living, breathing fabric of Scotland. Skara Brae in Orkney to the Buchanan Galleries Shopping Centre in Glasgow are all part of our ever-changing ideas of architecture. Great castles like Stirling or Edinburgh, although ancient, are still in use to this day, and we should not forget the major players in all this history business – the people.

I feel as though the blood that runs in my veins is the same as that which ran in the men who backed Calgacus against the might of the Roman invaders. That same blood was there at Stirling Bridge, Bannockburn and a host of other fights where Scotland struggled for its right to existence.

I suppose I'm trying to say that the best site with a connection to Scotland's history I can recommend this week is your library or bookshop. It's all there. ■

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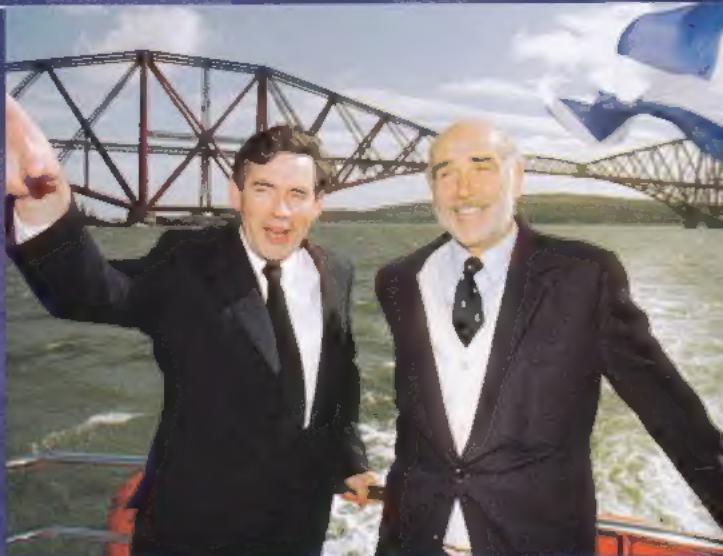
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SCOTLAND'S STORY

NEXT WEEK IN PART 51



ROAD TO DEVOLUTION

After almost 300 years in adjournment, the Scottish Parliament is back in business, taking decisions once more in the nation's capital city on how the Scottish people are governed. The road to Devolution was seldom without drama or incident and when the moment arrived, it was greeted with a quietly intense feeling that history was in the making.

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